



HEADMISTRESS' PRIZEGIVING REPORT ON THE SCHOOL YEAR 2006-7

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A year in the life of a school, when it is PGS, represents massive achievement and extraordinary success both on a collective and an individual level. If you think back to last September and the beginning of this school year, to what you knew, and were able to do then and compare that to what you know and are able to do now, every single one of you should be able to acknowledge significant achievement and considerable success. When you are back in lessons tomorrow take a little time to look at the first pages of your exercise books, and at the targets you set yourselves to achieve over the year, then look at the work you have produced most recently and you will undoubtedly see that you have gained significantly in skill, knowledge and understanding over the year and, as such, achieved great success. Think not only of academic success, as represented in your exercise books, but also of all you have managed to achieve in every aspect of school life – the friendships you have made, the problems you have overcome, the sporting skills you have acquired or improved, food you have cooked, paintings and models you have created responsibilities you have taken on and carried out so well. Today, regrettably, we have not been able to recognise every single achievement of every single pupil individually – I suspect we would need a prizegiving ceremony that lasts at least a day, if not a week, in which to do that. If you are one of the pupils who has not received an award today please do not think that you have not been successful – you have and you deserve to congratulate yourselves heartily.

If I ask you to think of PGS Junior School what do you think of – archways, doorways, bricks, lions, classrooms, playing fields, playgrounds or do you think of friends, friendship, smiling faces, warm gestures, helpful teachers and enjoyable experiences? I would imagine you have to some extent combined these images. However, I believe, strongly, that it is people who make a place, not bricks and mortar no matter how splendid the bricks and mortar may be. PGS Junior School is the people who are part of it, the pupils, their parents and all the staff. Therefore any success achieved by individuals or groups of pupils in the name of PGS Junior School should be celebrated collectively by us all and we should all feel proud because we are the Junior School of PGS.

Over the year our School (we!) have seen considerable success: academic, sporting, musical, dramatic and artistic and I would like to share some of these with you now.

COMMENDABLE ACHIEVEMENTS OF 2006/7

Firstly, academic success

Once again we have seen outstanding success in our Year 6 pupils gaining places in the Senior School and were delighted when a number of these pupils gained scholarships and exhibitions. Our Year 6 pupils also distinguished themselves in the KS2 SATs this term by

improving our percentage of Level 5's in English by 10% on last year. (74% of our pupils attained a level 5.) Level 5 is the standard expected nationally of 13 year olds.

In Science 86% of our pupils gained Level 5 and in Maths 73%. Our Year Two pupils also did very well in their SATs assessments with many pupils achieving a Level 3 in Maths, English and Science. Level 3 is the level expected nationally of a Year 4 pupil. 43% of our pupils achieved this in Science, 42% in Maths and 38% in Reading.

Brain power was also very evident in the Preparatory Schools National U11 General Knowledge Quiz with our PGS team coming 8th out of 118 teams from across the country. Year 6 pupil, Guy Snowball was awarded 9th place in the whole of Great Britain – with 1,600 pupils entering the competition this was a particularly fine achievement. Year 5 pupils, Rowan Dixon and Christopher Nash have recently qualified for an audition for a place in the BBC television Junior Mastermind competition. We are keeping our fingers crossed that at least one of them will be chosen for the television series that is to be screened in the autumn.

Now on to sporting achievements

Considerable success has been experienced in all sports over the year.

The U11 netball team hardly lost a fixture. They won the local Prep Schools tournament, came second at the Regional finals and reached the National Finals where they were placed 9th equal. This is the third consecutive year that our U11 netball team has achieved this.

The U11 rounders team just missed out on reaching the national finals. Unfortunately, the final qualifying game took place the day after the girls returned from the Year 6 residential weekend, they returned from the weekend exhausted which could well have had an impact on their performance. Nevertheless they should be proud of gaining 5th = place in the country.

The U11 mixed Hockey team won the Portsmouth Schools Hockey League for the 3rd year running and also won the cup competition.

The boys U11 soccer team were runners up at the local Prep Schools 6-a-side tournament. They reached the final of the Portsmouth Schools 7-a-side tournament and therefore ended up the second best School U11 soccer team in Portsmouth.

The girls U11 soccer team reached the semi finals of the Portsmouth Schools knock-out cup placing them equal third best team in Portsmouth.

The U11 rugby team won all their matches bar one and were the plate winners of the regional Rugby sevens tournament.

The U11 cricket team were the winners of the 8-a-side county festival and then became finalists of the Southern National regional finals losing by one run off the last ball.

Many teams from across the school, representing all the sports at 'A', 'B' or 'C' levels experienced unbeaten seasons this year.

Many individual pupils have also achieved notable success in sport over the year and a number of them have played for the County of Hampshire: Andrew Gorvin, Oliver Howard and Evie Howarth for tennis. Sam Collings-Wells, Jack Marston and Henry Farrant for cricket, Brandon Choi for swimming and Rowan Dixon won the Hampshire Junior Triathlon Championships. Charlotte Stephenson, Katie Paxman, Annie Materna, Lucy Sullivan, Josh Darlington, Sam Collings-Wells and Tom Lavery have played Hockey in the Southern England County Championships. In the less popular sports, James Marsh reached 4th place in

a national fencing competition and Anthony Muscatt is beginning to distinguish himself as an ice skater. Tom Gambs, Liam and Devlin Stigant are all gold belts at Choi Kwang-do. Sam Williams, Harry Staley and Hugo Andrew gained second place in the Southern Counties Ski Championship and Sam and Hugo were part of the British squad competing in the International ski championships. Georgina and Nial Houston, Tom Lavery and Matthew Hall all show great promise at sailing, competing in National events. Lastly Zoë Rundle has to be congratulated for gaining a place in Portsmouth Football Club U12 'A' ladies team. This comes as no surprise as I can picture her now when she was in Reception joining in with all the boys in the small quad playing football every play time.

We began the school year stating that we would like to put music at the heart of the school, I feel we have been well and truly successful in this respect. Well done Mr. Webber, Mrs. Nash, Mrs. Sheldrick and Miss Jubb! We now have four choirs in the Junior School, a Key Stage One choir a Year 3/4 choir a 5/6 choir and a Chamber Choir. Over the year they have been busy on a number of occasions; performing not only at various school concerts but also at the Naomi House 'Light a Candle' memorial service and at the Portsmouth Schools Music Festival held at Portsmouth Guildhall.

The popularity of playing a string instrument has increased so much over the year that, commencing in September, we shall have three string orchestras: providing a separate orchestra in each of Years 4, 5 and 6. Should we ever have occasion to combine the three orchestras I think we would need a stage at least the size of the Guildhall to perform on.

This year the Year 5/6 Corelli orchestra has taken part in a Prep Schools string workshop organised by Mrs. Ingamells; they have performed at the Justin Somper Vampire's Day and at the carol service, as well as at various school concerts and indeed today. The Vivaldi Orchestra has been performing at a consistently high standard this year and were therefore invited to put on a special concert at the end of this term which was very well received. These very talented string players will form the newly created Year 5 Purcell orchestra next year.

The Brass Band goes from strength to strength, now with over forty members from Year 1 to Year 6. In addition to the regular school concerts the band has performed with the London Mozart players and School Chamber choir, has given a live radio performance from the Spinnaker Tower, has played on two occasions at Gunwharf Quays and at concerts with the Hampshire Children's choirs. They have performed at both the Portsmouth Music Festival and the Portsmouth Schools Music Festival. They helped create a 'pirating' atmosphere on Vampire's Day and, more recently, have led the processions of contestants at the three school sports days. They have provided superb entertainment at the School fete as well as at our Sports Prizegiving and indeed at this ceremony. Next week they will be going on their first ever concert tour to Belgium, where they will be performing in Bruges, Ypres and at the Menin Gate Last Post Ceremony.

One individual musical performance deserves a special mention: Year 6 pupil Ollie Chubb gave an outstanding trumpet performance at the 'D' Day commemoration service held at the Cathedral. It was reported that never before has such a moving rendition of the last post been heard. Ollie recently became a member of the National Children's Orchestra for Under 12's.

Drama often links with music and together they play a major role in the life of the School. Each of the year group from Reception to Year 6 has presented a musical performance this year revealing considerable talent and, most importantly, a huge degree of pupil enjoyment. Year 6 rounded the dramatic year off last week in truly expert fashion – almost bringing the house down with the outstanding production of 'A Midsummer's Nights Dream'. With exceptional singing and acting performances it was hard to believe that the pupils were only 11 years old.

Many pupils from the School entered the Portsmouth Festival of Music, Speech and Drama. Seven speech and drama classes were entered, 5 of these won by our pupils; 13 Brass classes were entered 9 of these won by our pupils and 10 pupils won string classes. I am pleased to say that we also have a number of very creative pupils. In Year 1 Taylor Barrington-Clarke won the Hiscock Art Gallery competition and Aelfred Hillman won 1st prize in the National Kellog's Art Attack competition. Year 2 pupil, Tom Ross won a City art competition designing a poster that raised awareness of the anti litter campaign and Year 4 pupil, Isabel Gunn's version of Munch's painting 'The Scream' is now hanging at the ISI headquarters in London. The excellent creative writing skills of Pippa Harris, Anastasia Manuel, Yasmin Deter and Chi-Yung Lim were acknowledged when their pieces of work were selected for the 'Your world, my world, our world' Book produced by the City Council that contains samples of pupils creative writing from schools across the city.

Pupils and staff at PGS recognise how very privileged we are in all sorts of ways and are therefore very keen to focus on the needs of others. As such, we raise considerable amounts for charity each year. This year we have raised a magnificent total of nearly £10,000 for a number of charities: The NSPCC, Children in Need, Naomi House, The Well Child Campaign, LEPROA, Barnardos, Guide Dogs for the Blind and Cancer Research. A truly magnificent and hugely generous achievement.

In closing I would like to say three very important thankyou's. Firstly to the Junior School Association for its superb and hugely appreciated support of the school. Over the year it has held some great events: a fashion show, A Hallowe'en Disco, Christmas parties, a Christmas table top sale, a Murder Mystery, the Giant Sleepover, the Leavers Disco and the hugely popular Summer Fete. Although these events often create finances that are used to provide the Junior School with extra resources – this year a set of wireless laptops and playground equipment – mostly they serve to bring the Community together in a very enjoyable fashion.

The second thankyou has to go to the Junior School Staff who are unsurpassed in their enthusiasm, energy, dedication and commitment. Thank you so much for all you do and for the very professional way in which you do it. Sadly as the term ends we have to say goodbye to a number of staff: Mrs. Low who is moving to Bournemouth, Miss Coonan who is moving to London, Mrs. Price whose husband has been deployed to Oman, and Mrs. Pineo who has gained promotion and will be Senior House Mistress at Culford Preparatory School in Suffolk. Mrs. Youngs, Mrs. Kelly and Mrs. Lockyer are all retiring from teaching. They each have contributed significantly to the school while employed here, most particularly Mrs. Lockyer who leaves after 22 years dedicated service and after 22 stunning drama productions.

The third, and final thankyou has to go to the Headmaster, Dr. Hands, not just for his rôle as quest of honour at this prizegiving today but more importantly for all he has done for PGS Junior School and for the support he has given me over the last 10 years. He has displayed amazing vision, and insight and has been a true enabler. I am, as indeed the School is, indebted to him.